

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 6-10 have been amended. Claims 11-22 have been cancelled. Claims 23-27 have been withdrawn. Claims 1-10 are pending and under consideration.

WITHDRAWN CLAIMS

Regarding withdrawn claims 23-27, the Applicants wish to defer action until the application is otherwise in a condition for allowance.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-3, 5, 8 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hashiba et al. (JP 2001-149685) (hereinafter "Hashiba").

Claims 4, 6-7, 9-12 and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashiba in view of Mueller et al. (US 5,507,053) (hereinafter "Mueller").

Hashiba discusses a drum type washing machine designed to facilitate removal of a washing heater and cleaning of a portion containing it. In Hashiba, heater case 65 is detachably mounted in the bottom of a water tank 33 and the washing heater 73 is contained within the heater case 65, so that removal of the washing heater 73 for inspection, replacement and the like of the washing heater 73 and a cleaning operation for removing dust such as waste thread collecting in the portion containing it can be carried out by tilting an outer casing 21 and removing the washing heater 73 along with the heater case 65 from an opening 24 in the bottom.

Claims 1-10, 13-15 and 17-22

Claim 1 recites: "... a rotating axis of the rotary drum is inclined relative to a horizontal axis at a predetermined first angle of inclination allowing an inlet opening of the rotary drum to be directed upward and forward facing an inner surface of a door of the drum washing machine... an internal surface of the rotary drum being inclined relative to the rotating axis of the rotary drum at a predetermined second angle of inclination so as to guide the water to the drain hole, prior to discharging the water from the rotary drum to an outside of the rotary drum through the drain hole..."

In the anticipation rejection of claim 1 beginning on page 4 of the Office Action, no mention is made of the technical feature of claim 1 where the internal surface of the rotary drum is inclined relative to the rotating axis of the rotary drum at a **predetermined second angle of inclination** so as to guide the water to the drain hole. In Hashiba, the tank 33 and rotary drum 42 are inclined at a first angle corresponding to the inclination of the shaft of the motor 88. However, to anticipate claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the rotary drum 42 should have inclined sides, which is not shown in the drawings of Hashiba. To the contrary, it appears that the rotary drum 42 has a consistent diameter throughout its length.

The technical feature of claim 1 of an inclined internal surface of the rotary drum provides for a washing machine which uses less water, and reduces an amount of electricity required to heat the water, and reduces washing time, without reducing the washing effect of the drum washing machine.

Although not specifically relied on for the rejection of claim 1, the Office Action notes that Mueller shows in Figure 2 an inner rotating basket 36 that decreases in diameter toward the back or bottom part of the basket. It is respectfully submitted that Mueller also does not show the technical feature of claim 1 of the inclined internal surface of the rotary drum. Instead, Mueller discusses that the spin basket 36 defines a wash chamber and includes a partly spherical inside wall surface 37 extending upwardly from a substantially flat bottom. The only mention of the inside wall surface 37 of Mueller is that it is "partly spherical." Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Mueller also does not show the inclined internal surface recited in claim 1.

Further, Hashiba only discusses a hot air circulation unit which includes a dehumidifier 47, an air blower 48, an air heater 49, and an air duct 50, not a washing water circulation unit.

Claims 13, 14 and 17-22 have been cancelled. Claims 2-9 depend on claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons. Claims 6-10 have been amended to improve the form of the claims, no new matter has been added.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claims 11 and 15

Claims 11 and 15 have been cancelled.

Claims 12 and 16

Claims 12 and 16 have been cancelled.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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